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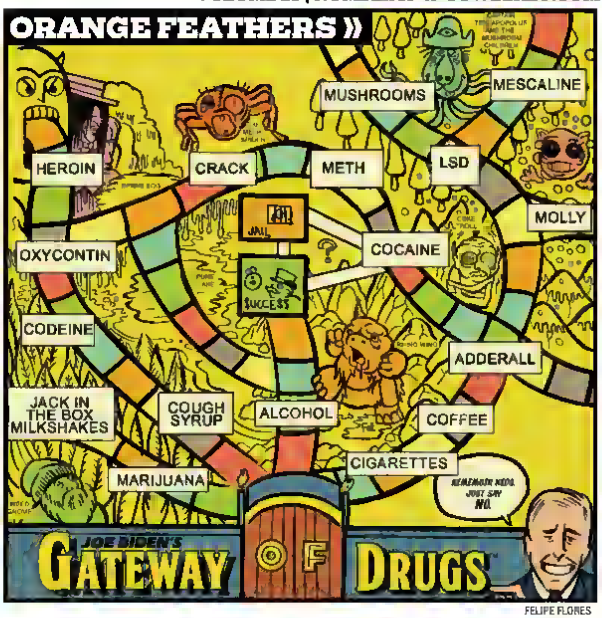

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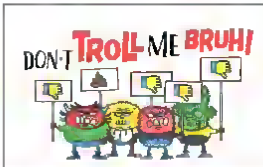

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—Julie Hert, commenting on Edwin Goei's "Yes, the New Casa Barilla at South Coast Plaza Is Run by the Same Company That Makes Jarred Sauce" (Feb. 28, 2018)

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'Transition Has Been Hell'

On Veteran's Day, I thought of my friend Chris

BY ANTHONY PIGNATARO

On this past Veteran's Day, I was thinking more than usual about my old friend Chris Atencio. We met in 2000 and became friends after he moved in next door. He had traveled the world, lived and surfed everywhere it seemed, but he'd grown up in Newport Beach, which he considered home.

Atencio joined the U.S. Army about a year after 9/11; though known to most everyone he knew as a free spirit, he also craved structure and purpose in his life, and joining the service offered both. He did a tour of duty in the Iraq war, rose to the rank of captain, then was honorably discharged in the summer of 2013.

Six months later, he killed himself. He was 42.

A few months after his death, I wrote what I could about his time in the service, struggles with PTSD and death. (See "For American Military Veterans, Transition Has Been Hell," May 22, 2014.) It's not as complete as I would have liked, but these things never are.

"Hoping we can hang out sometime," Atencio emailed a friend just a few weeks before he died. "I'm at the VA next Tues[day] and Wed[nesday]. Home has sucked. Transition has been hell."

It's been nearly six years since Atencio died, and the Army is still struggling with transition. In 2013, veterans were killing themselves at a rate of about 22 per day. Today, the Defense Department says that number is closer to 17, though that's apparently because of a change in the way it calculates the rate. At the same time, the suicide rate for active-duty military personnel has been climbing in recent years. The year 2018 saw 325 active-duty suicides—the highest on record since the Defense Department began tracking the data in 2001.

The Pew Research Center recently published the results of a survey of American veterans who were in transition—what happens when a service member leaves the military and rejoins civilian life. The findings were striking, especially for post-9/11 vets like Atencio: "About half of post-9/11 veterans (47 percent) say it was very or somewhat difficult for them to readjust to civilian life after their military service. About a third of veterans (35 percent) say they had trouble paying their bills in their first few years after leaving the military, and roughly three in 10 (28 percent) say they received unemployment compensation. One in five say they struggled with alcohol or substance abuse. Veterans who say they have suffered from PTSD are much more likely to report experiencing these things than those who did not."

I still get emails from people who knew Atencio. This isn't unusual, given the fact that he made friends with so many people around the world throughout his life. It's nearly always the same story: They randomly think of him, wonder whatever happened to him, type his name into a Google search box, and then find my 2014 story on his death. Some served with Atencio in the Army; others knew him from years prior to his service and had no idea he ever joined up. A couple have even become my friends, which is very strange for me to think about because it's highly unlikely I would have ever met them had Atencio not taken his own life.

The most recent person to reach out was a man named David in Copenhagen. He emailed me two months ago: "I was showing my eldest daughter some Wedge footage on YouTube last night, and I told her I'd met this guy Chris on Hossegor Beach in Southwest France in the summer of '92 or '93. We became friends. ... We stayed in touch for years. ... I was deeply shocked to read of his suicide after quitting the military. I also can't quite believe he even enlisted. He was such a free spirit, I didn't think he was military material."

Though Atencio struggled throughout his years in uniform with "toxic" officers—bad commanders who were more interested in punching tickets and filling out their resumés than really thinking about why we spent so many years fighting in the Middle East with such terrible results—and blamed his early discharge on them, he also loved the Army. He loved being an intelligence officer in Iraq, he thrived in situations in which he got to use his considerable language skills to gather information and build relationships.

But Atencio also went to Iraq relatively late in the war, long after the military had given up trying to "win" and was now just focused on keeping U.S. casualties low. None of his superiors in Iraq, he told me not long after his discharge, had wanted his memos or briefings on the need to pay attention to local culture and history.

At the same time, Atencio loved being around intelligent, skilled professionals who had traveled the world as he had. He spoke highly of meeting tremendous people in the service and of learning all he could from them. About a year after he died, one of his former non-commissioned officers (NCOs) emailed me. He had served with Atencio in Japan at the end of his career and had taken his death hard. He said he was "ashamed" at how he had seen "warning signs" of Atencio's depression, but he hadn't said or done anything because he assumed he would work it all out. I wrote him back, thanking him for his letter and saying that in hindsight, we all saw signs of trouble but had largely done nothing because we all thought Chris would just keep on being Chris.

The sergeant also recalled Atencio's farewell ceremony, in which he had formally relinquished command. He said Atencio had told the other officers there that the most important lesson he learned in the Army was to listen to his NCOs—his sergeants, whose experience and skills made them the backbone of any military unit—and not presume they know everything simply because they were officers. That was true leadership, the sergeant wrote, and it really touched him and the others.

Atencio had spent his career—maybe even his life—looking for exactly that kind of leadership, and it pains me now to think that he never saw it in himself.

APIGNATARO@OCWEEKLY.COM

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

» GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

PHOTOS BY JESSICA CEBALLOS Y CAMPBELL

Overlooked Orchards

Whenever she works remotely from Disneyland, Highland Park writer Jessica Ceballos y Campbell starts her mornings at the Gibson Girl Ice Cream Parlor before the crowds rush in around lunchtime. After clocking out, she spends her afternoons roaming the theme park, observing and taking notes of all the happy happenings. Ceballos y Campbell's self-appointed writing residency will one day translate into *Happiest Place On Earth*, a poetry project centered on a Disneyland visit with her mother in 1984 while in foster care.

But in August, Ceballos y Campbell's watchful eye led her to take notice of Tomorrowland in a way she hadn't before. "Is that mint?" she asked herself. "Why is there a farm in Tomorrowland?"

The writer also noticed a kale bunch, and her curiosity only grew from there. Ceballos y Campbell discovered avocados, oranges, spinach, basil, chile peppers, garlic and parsley.

She began researching online only to find a handful of write-ups dedicated to Tomorrowland's often-overlooked "agrifuture" concept, which was meant to display the use of free space to grow food and feed the people. Sure, a sign along the Disneyland Railroad reads "agrifuture" and depicts a robot watering plants, but with all the sensory distraction in Tomorrowland, it's all-too-easy to miss the orchard for the trees.

Though she's leery of the parsley, given its proximity to the diesel fumes, a not so futuristic fuel, chugging out of Autopia, Ceballos y Campbell did nose off a mint leaf from elsewhere and tried it. "I've picked them in front of cast members," she says. "Nobody seems to mind." She's not entirely sure if all the crops are just as edible—and can't quite seem to get a straight answer on that question.

Her agrifuture revelation may factor into a side project but can just as easily be woven into the narrative of *Happiest Place On Earth*, which she hopes to finish by year's end.

"It's all tied together," says Ceballos y Campbell. "With the vegetation, it really opened up a whole new perspective for me and something else to bring to the work."

GSANROMAN@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Dr. Top

SIDE AOL

You are the handsome man with a promising future—and better yet, you're a top! (Or at least that's what your profile states.) It was infatuated on our date; it was a romance I hadn't experienced with another man since my freshman year of university. We enjoyed a late-night talk at Huntington Beach, then beers and Mexican food afterward. You sent me a long text the next day informing me that you just wanted to be friends because you suddenly had a "boyfriend." You told me my real-life tone and texts were turn-offs—then you ghosted me. I suspect it's because your medical degree is so far up your ass you don't see the value in my bachelor of arts. Moral of the rant: Text me. (I'm growing my online presence.)

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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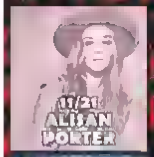

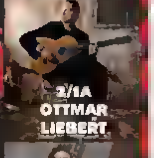

11/21	ALISAN PORTER	1/3	BEATLES vs STONES
11/22	THE ASSOCIATION	1/4	LOS STELLARIANS
11/23	98.5FM Presents: OZOMATLI	1/9	JONNNY BRITT (Marvin meets Miles)
11/24	KATE VOEGELE & TYLER HILTON	1/10	DAVID LINDLEY
11/29	X / LOS STRAITJACKETS	1/11	WILD CHILO
11/30	X / LOS STRAITJACKETS	1/12	NEARTBEAT CITY
12/1	X / LOS STRAITJACKETS	1/16	COCO MONTOYA
12/6	JONNY LANG	1/17	MIDGE URE
12/7	BLUE OYSTER CULT	1/18	STEVE TYRELL
12/8	HIGHERGROUND (Stevie Wonder Tribute)	1/18	TNE WAILERS
12/13	THE SIDE DEAL	1/21	98.5FM Presents: BIG NEAD TODD & THE MONSTERS / Sean Watkins
12/14	TNE MUSICAL BOX	1/24	SNELETON CREW
12/18	ANDREW MCMANON	1/25	TNE PETTY BREAKERS
12/20	GARY No Ho NOEY	1/26	JONN MAYALL
12/21	AMBROSIA	1/28	TOAD TNE WET SPROCNET
12/22	David Benoit CNARLIS BROWN CNRISTMAS	1/31	QUEEN NATION
12/27	DONAVON FRANNENREITER / Tom Curren	2/6	THE FOUR FRESNMEN
12/28	DONAVON FRANNENREITER / Tom Curren	2/7	WYNONNA & TNE BIG NOISE
12/29	BOB ANDERSON THE GREATEST SINGING IMPRESSIONIST IN THE WORLD	2/8	SINEAD O'CONNOR
12/31	TNE ENGLISH BEAT / TNE UNTOUCHABLES	2/9	NINKA COSTA
		2/13	PNIL VASSAR
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UPCOMING SHOWS

2/15	PAT BOONE	3/13	O. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE
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2/21	JOSNUA RADIN & friends with BEN KWELLER and WILLIAM FITZSIMMONS	3/15	AARON NEVILLE
		3/20	TOMMY CASTRO
		3/21	BERLIN
2/23	SURTON CUMMINGS	3/27	THE SAMPLES & FREDDY JONES BAND
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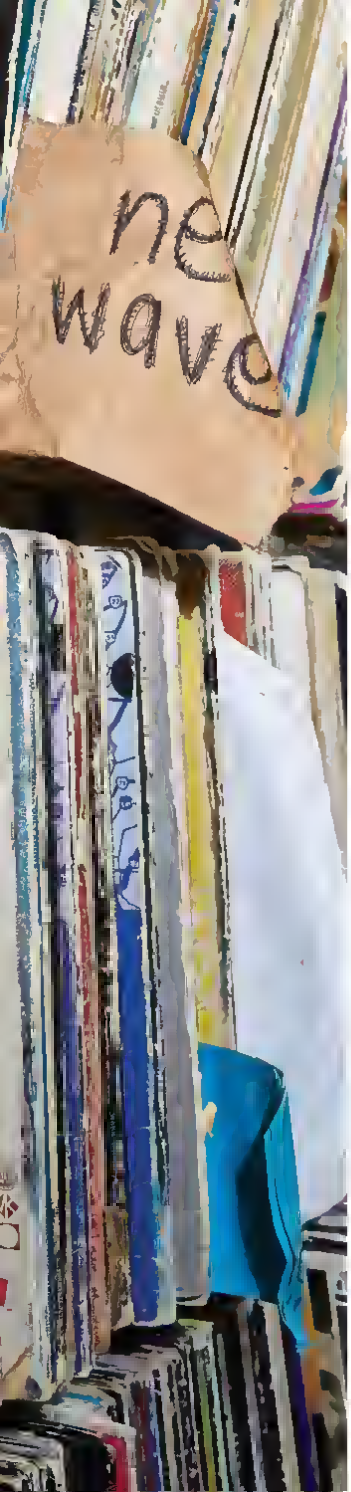
KUCI CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF UNDERGROUND MUSIC AND TALK

THE RADIO STATION'S REBELLIOUS ROOTS RUN DEEP

BY STEVE DONOFRIO • PHOTOGRAPHY BY FEDERICO MEDINA



"If my mom's heard of it, it's probably not something we'd play on KUCI," Kevin Stockdale, the station's broadcast-media director, says with a laugh. Jokes aside, this sentiment has been at the heart of UC Irvine's FM radio station for the past 50 years and through innumerable changes. Sure, more than a few mainstream artists have ridden the KUCI airwaves, but it was always long before they "made it big." And by the time that happens, the station's DJs have moved on to the next batch of undiscovered talent. The station has also hosted countless talk shows and guest speakers over the years, covering topics that are rarely discussed by the mainstream outlets, making folks at the station pioneers and trendsetters.

Stockdale, who's managed the station as its only full-time employee for well more than half of its lifespan, believes KUCI has always stuck to its original mission. "I think in the '70s, they played some stuff that, to me, looks mainstream, but in 1973 was potentially unheard of," he says. "I think just doing something that maintains our independence and the freedom for the DJs to have the experience to research and program their own shows is invaluable. And I think that all along, we've been able to find things the audience isn't going to hear anywhere else."

KUCI founding engineer Earl Arbuckle visits KUCI (June 12, 2008)

KUCI's rebellious roots run deep

It started as a pirate radio station in 1967. UCI student Richard Privette recorded tapes, and with the help of engineering student Craig Will—who constructed a makeshift AM antenna—the two broadcasted from an Anteater dorm room. The signal was weak and had a range that spread only a couple of miles away from the campus. Two other students, Lee Sailer and Zark Zenor, soon began broadcasting a nightly talk and live music show from Sailer's dorm room.

Unfortunately, around that time, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) had begun taking illegal broadcasts more seriously, and the station was shut down.

According to Stockdale, there are some discrepancies about who specifically put an end to KUCI's pirate-radio days. "I've been here for 36 years now, and it was always [said to be] an illegal station in the dorms that was shut down by the FCC," he says. "But this person who put together some stuff for KUCI and had a history portion came up with that it was shut down by the campus police, which is much less dramatic. Then I was talking to somebody from the communications office who's doing a [similar] piece. He had done his research, and he had come up with the fact that, since they had strung wires through the dorm to make the AM antenna, it was the resident assistant who said, 'You have to take this down.'"

Stockdale adds with a chuckle, "So perhaps the reality is that it wasn't the FCC, and it wasn't cops—it was just the dorm manager."

Whatever the details of its initial shutdown, the result was KUCI (which remains entirely student-run) was forced to either become legit or fade into obscurity. Luckily, Will decided to undertake the task of legalizing the station. It received funding from the school's student government and applied for registration with the FCC that year. When Will was unable to follow through with the process because of a combination of schoolwork and an injury from radiation testing, fellow Anteater Earl Arbuckle picked it up. In 1968, the station then briefly broadcasted out of another dorm room at 900 MHz on the AM dial.

On Oct. 16, 1969, KUCI did its initial on-air test at FM 89.9. While there's some debate about which song was played first, most agree that it was "Sugar, Sugar" by the Archies, other contenders include the Beatles' "Yellow Submarine" and the

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

VINYLS—YES, VINYLS—STILL LINE KUCI'S WALLS

SOUND SALVATION

» FROM PAGE 9

Youngbloods' "Get Together." The station had been moved to a storage closet in UCI's Physical Sciences building, where two turntables, a tape deck and a low-budget mixing board had been installed, it broadcasted illegally for a month before it was granted a license by the FCC in November 1969. At this time, KUCI's transmitting signal was only 10 watts.

DJs could essentially play whatever they wanted and often spun records from their own collections. There was no set schedule, and the only real guideline was to stay away from the mainstream. As a result, the station offered an eclectic selection, ranging from jazz, blues and rock to the avant-garde and politically charged. Dean Okrand, who served as assistant station manager in the 1970s, often broadcasted "sound collages" late at night, in which he'd play two records simultaneously, sometimes spinning one backward.

The station moved in 1971 to a new studio space on the third floor of UCI's Gateway Commons. In 1974, KUCI adopted a 24/7 programming schedule; later, the station expanded its broadcasting range. "We were given permission to amplify the antenna," Stockdale explains, "so we were effectively 24 watts using a 10-watt transmitter."

In a 1979 *Daily Pilot* article celebrating KUCI's 10th anniversary, then-general manager Bill Garrison said, "We don't even know who our faculty advisor is. We run ourselves completely, which is the way we like it."

While it seemed as if the station had reached a point of relatively smooth sailing, troubled waters lay ahead. In early 1981, Santa Monica College's radio station KCRW also used the FM 89.9 frequency; it boosted its signal and ultimately overpowered KUCI. "KCRW moved their antenna to Mt. Wilson," Stockdale says. "We were just a little educational station that didn't have any real protection, so we got squashed to the point where you couldn't even pick us up in the lobby."

In 1983, the year he joined the radio station, Stockdale was a freshman biology student at UCI. "I kind of had a reputation for just being one of those kids that played punk rock," he says. As he established himself as a connoisseur of heavy and extreme music, he supported many up-and-coming bands that would later become household names. He interviewed Megadeth when they were touring in support of their debut album. He escorted Social Distortion from the station to get permission and all that stuff."

That KUCI was able to switch frequencies was nothing short of a miracle, considering how saturated the radio market is in Southern California. "UC San Diego and UCLA both have no frequency and never have," Stockdale says. "UCLA is right in the middle of the second-largest radio market, so they got on the boat too late and didn't get a frequency. Same thing with San Diego."

Today, KUCI continues to broadcast via FM 88.9.

For five months, KUCI literally struggled to be heard while it waited for a response to its request for a new frequency. DJs continued to spin an eclectic mix of underground and niche music, with a playlist that showed a regular rotation of the likes of ambient producer Brian Eno, avant-garde ensemble the Residents, pop group Was (Not Was), and punk acts such as the Alley Cats and Blitz.

The discovery that the government had lost the paperwork for KUCI's request sparked protests and petitions across the student community—and beyond.

KUCI resurfaced at FM 88.9 on Aug. 20, 1981. Stockdale attributes this successful move to a bit of luck and yet another determined volunteer. "Somehow—I guess he wasn't a student anymore at the time, but still—somebody who was young and working by themselves managed to get the studies done to figure out what our options were," he recalls, "and to find out that there was an opportunity to move to 88.9, and then to apply with the FCC and

In 1983, the year he joined the radio station, Stockdale was a freshman biology student at UCI. "I kind of had a reputation for just being one of those kids that played punk rock," he says. As he established himself as a connoisseur of heavy and extreme music, he supported many up-and-coming bands that would later become household names. He interviewed Megadeth when they were touring in support of their debut album. He escorted Social Distortion from the station to a performance at UCI's Crawford Hall. A fellow DJ was able to bring punk legends such as Keith Morris (Circle Jerks, Black Flag) and the Offspring to the studio for live performances and interviews. Metallica front man James Hetfield even recorded a station ID for KUCI at the end of a phone interview. "He does the ID, and then you hear this pause before he lets out this burp," Stockdale recalls. "I'll always remember that. It wasn't a very strong burp, but the sentiment was there."

Regardless of guest appearances and interviews, Stockdale says, there's one failsafe way to tell which albums have received the most airtime over the years. "The more beat-up and the more times the jacket is taped, that's the more popular band," he says. "So you look at any of the first few TSOL albums or something like that, they're just destroyed."

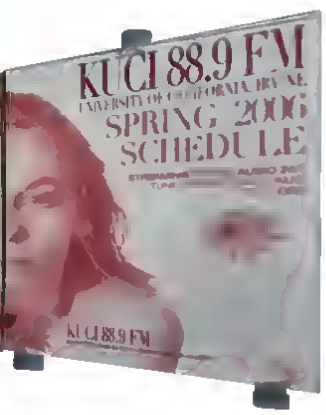
By the time Stockdale graduated in 1988, he had become the station's student manager.

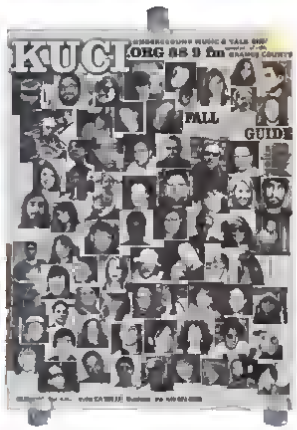
Meanwhile, the FCC had been gear-

ing up to make some regulation changes. As part of these changes, there was the opportunity for KUCI to increase its power from 24 watts to 200 watts. As a result, UCI "set aside a little money and created a part-time position called Broadcast Media Coordinator," Stockdale says. "And I was fortunate enough to get that out of five applicants. One of the main things was working on this power increase, but we were also looking at working on just year-to-year, having some sort of institutional memory and some continuity. When students graduate, you reinvent the wheel every few years, so we didn't have to do that anymore."

After about two years at the helm, he was hired as a full-time employee, which allowed him to quit his second job at a Domino's Pizza.

When he was hired in December 1988, Stockdale promised to provide that sense of consistency and continuity that was missing, and that's exactly what he's done for more than 30 years.





KUCI finally increased its power to 200 watts in March 1993. Although it's still considerably low compared to industry standards (KOST 103.5 transmits at 11,500 watts), the expansion allowed the station to reach a much wider audience. To celebrate, the staff played "Sugar, Sugar" while carrying Stockdale through the studio. This change also marked the first time in the station's history that it could broadcast in stereo. "We had been mono all those years," Stockdale says. "It's crazy and embarrassing—plus, when you're listening to garage rock or punk rock, for that matter, on a low-power station, stereo doesn't really [make a difference]."

Of course, more issues came along with the power increase, the most notable of which was that KXLU, a low-power radio station based at Loyola Marymount, also broadcasts on FM 88.9. The increased power meant a higher risk of interference. "We were able to develop a new antenna that had a specialized pattern," Stockdale says of the KUCI braintrust's solution. "It's kind of like a kidney bean, and the part that's missing is where KXLU is. So we could increase our power as long as we avoided [Loyola Marymount's] protected contours."

The following year, as UCI prepared Gateway Commons for seismic retrofitting, the station was again forced to move. KUCI found a home in a temporary building that actually became its permanent base. Most of that building's walls are lined with CDs and vinyl records.

Just a few years later, KUCI would again prove its ability to adapt, even to new technologies, as it became one of the first radio stations to webcast. In 1997, the station was one of three granted permission to use a small startup company's technology to stream via the internet, free of charge. "It was a weird, primitive version of it," Stockdale says, "but in '97, before any of our counterparts were on the web, suddenly people in England could hear [us]. People who moved out of the area could hear [us]. UCI Anteaters sports fans could tune into our basketball broadcast. That was a huge benefit."

Stockdale argues that the introduction of webcasting opened up possibilities for schools that hadn't been able to get slots on the FM dial such as UCLA and UCSD. "They used to broadcast kind of like hotwired into the dorms," he says. "Then when streaming came along, that really put them out to a much wider audience, albeit an audience that had to know where to find them."

Streaming has also attracted sports fans to KUCI. The station broadcasts Anteater baseball, as well as men's and women's basketball games. Stockdale has noticed that a large portion of the station's online audience is made up of the teams' fans who are presumably too far away to tune in over the radio. "When the teams make the postseason, that's when the listenership goes up," he says. "I know that the year KUCI aired UCI baseball in the College World Series, we had 300 [to] 350 people [tuning in], whereas music shows got 10, 15, 20 people. For the series before the World Series, we weren't on TV. So if you wanted to hear the game, [KUCI was] the only place."

Of course, technology isn't the only arena in which KUCI has been ahead of the curve. Countless musical artists spent time in the station's studio and on its airwaves before gaining mainstream popularity. "We had No Doubt, Sublime and those kinds of artists playing in our lobby live in the early '90s," Stockdale says. "Usually, if we lose somebody, it's because KROQ has picked up on them. We used to have the Airborne Toxic Event here; one DJ had a good relationship with them, so they performed a bunch of times over the years, and they would also come in and just guest host with her. Then, through the [*Locals Only* show] on KROQ, [Airborne Toxic Event] got picked up and became a KROQ band."

No Doubt played at a 1990 radio conference that KUCI hosted in UCI's then-new Student Center, which proved to be less than ideal. The crowd of students broke a few chairs and scratched the center's stage. As a result, KUCI was banned from using anything in the Student Center for an entire year. Interestingly, all of this excitement occurred about a year or two before No Doubt's self-titled debut album was released.

A ton of artists have played live in the KUCI studio—among them, contemporary psych-rock gods Thee Oh Sees, ska punks Big D and the Kids Table, and indie rock icons Grizzly Bear. "We used to play the bell out of Modest Mouse," Stockdale says. "We will play stuff, and it will become really popular here or just in college radio in general, and then it gets the attention of the bigger stations. As much as it hurts us to see that happen, we're happy for their success, and there's more undiscovered music to help us continue our mission of exposing that stuff."

Although the medium has changed (most of its current DJs play digital music from their laptops), KUCI is just as committed to underground music and opinions as it was 50 years ago. Playing mainstream music is prohibited, and a certain number of new releases must be included on each playlist. Most important, students are given the opportunity to learn and gain experience, whether it be from scouring the station's collection of 40,000 vinyl records and 35,000 CDs or rehearsing commentary and playlist flow in the practice studio.

Stockdale is both grateful for the station's past and hopeful for its future. "We've been very fortunate to be so stable for many years now, and I just hope that continues," he says. "I mean, the administration would be foolish to decide they don't want our station anymore, and they'll never get it back if they give up that frequency. So I'm hoping for at least another 50 years of prosperity and underground music and talk."

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LET THEM IN

SHAWN BRACKBILL

fri/11/22

[CONVENTIONS]

It's Playtime

DesignerCon

More than 800 designers, artists and manufacturers will be crammed into the Anaheim Convention Center this weekend for the three-day DesignerCon 2019. Though the event began in 2006 to showcase the vinyl toy/collectibles market, the convention has since expanded to include "everything in the world of design, including apparel, plush, printing, sculpture, designer toys, and art ranging from fine to urban," according to show organizers. Which, while great to hear, is also fancy talk for "tons of new toys!" *Sweet!* Friday night is strictly for VIP ticket holders, but Saturday and Sunday are open to all, with tickets costing as little as $30.

DesignerCon at the Anaheim Convention Center, 800 W. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (818) 928-9295, designercon.com. 5 p.m., also Sun. $30-$200. —ANTHONY PIGNATARO

[CONCERT]

Get Up Stay Up

The Get Up Kids

Those of us who remember the Get Up Kids back in the aughts recall *Something to Write Home About*, their second and perhaps most memorable album. In their halcyon days, the Missouri quartet were generally associated with emo music, but their sound was much more elaborate and complex. They continued to produce more challenging and mature material that channeled their inner angst and mined deeper into indie and alternative rock. The Matt Pryor-led group have earned new acclaim and continue to grow up with their latest album, *Problems*, which dives into topics ranging from "life-changing loss . . . to the inevitable anxiety of existing in 2019." *Oof!* If you can relate, join the band tonight at Chain Reaction.

The Get Up Kids with Kevin Devine and the Whiffs at Chain Reaction, 1652 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, (714) 635-6067, allages.com. 7 p.m. $26. —AIMEE MURILLO

sat/11/23

[COMPETITIONS]

JINGLE SWELLS

Surfing Santa & Stand Up Paddle Boarding Contest

The Ninth Annual Surfing Santa contest is exactly what you might imagine it is: Each year, people dress up like Santa Claus, then go stand-up paddleboarding at Salt Creek Beach. Since 2010, the Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel has sponsored the two-day contest as a benefit for the nonprofit Surfers Healing, a surf camp for autistic children. And the event has brought in nearly $400,000 to date for the camp. It's open to men and women of any age, with cash prizes ranging from $500 to $2,000 for both best surfing and best costume.

Ninth Annual Surfing Santa & Stand Up Paddle Boarding Contest at the Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel, 1 Ritz-Carlton Dr., Dana Point; surfingsantacontest.org. 7:30 a.m., also Sun. Registration, $20-$60. —ANTHONY PIGNATARO

[CONCERT]

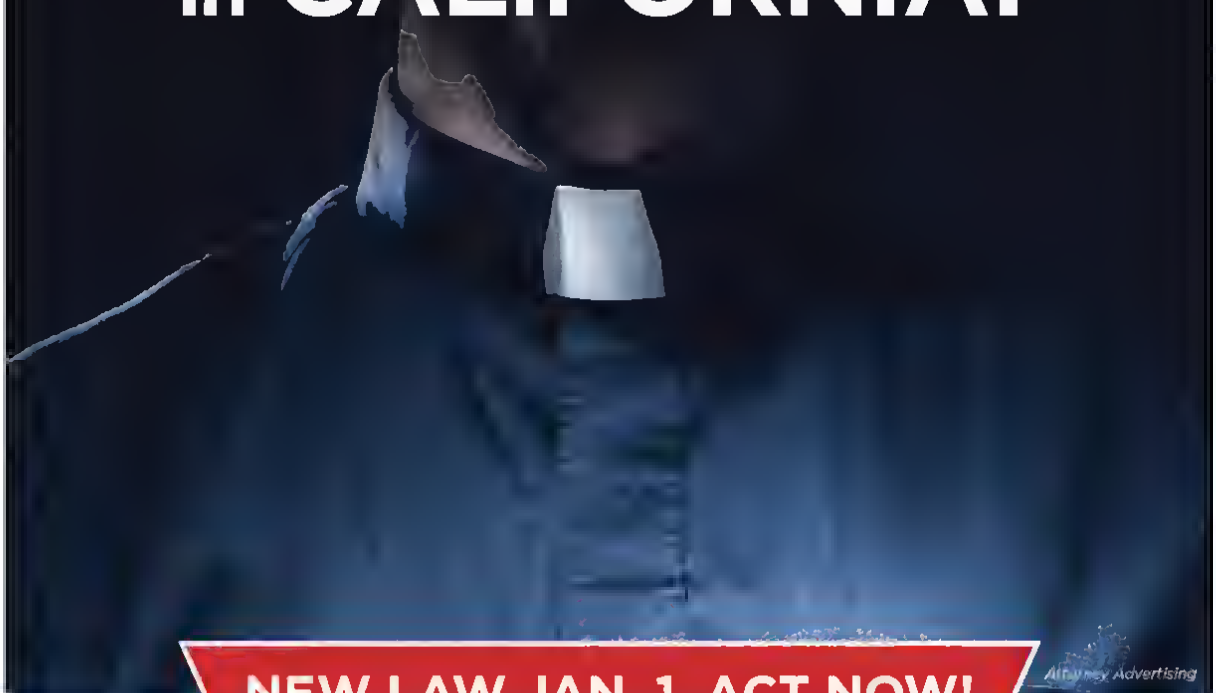
Latin Pop *Princesa*

Ximena Sariñana

It's hard to believe, but a decade has already passed since Mexican singer Ximena Sariñana graced music-lovers with *Mediocre*, her masterful 2008 debut. Now a mother in her early 30s, the musician returns with *¿Dónde Batlardn Las Niñas?* Recorded while pregnant with her daughter, Sariñana's fourth studio album beams like the meditation on womanhood it is. Firmly rooted in Latin-pop sensibilities, she continues experimenting with complementary sounds, as evidenced on the reggaeton-infused "Si tú te vas." The effort underscores why Sariñana remains one of her generation's most successful Mexican performers.

Ximena Sariñana at Constellation Room, 3505 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. $25. —GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

ABUSED by CLERGY in CALIFORNIA?



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SPEAKER TOPIC
FROM SELFISHNESS TO SELFLESSNESS
November 22

SPEAKER TOPIC
I DON'T WANT TO; JUST DO IT
November 29

SPEAKER TOPIC
THE JOURNEY FROM SELFISH TO SELFLESS
December 6

sun/11/24

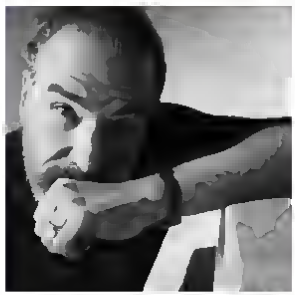
[FOOD & DRINK]

THE YEAST IS STRONG

It's a Tap

A long, long time ago in a brewery far, far away ... it is a period of thirstiness. Rebel beer bellies, striking from a hidden tap room, have won their first victory against the evil Constellation Brands. ... Okay, I can't keep this spoof going. I'm nursing a headache from too many pints of Pizza Port San Clemente's excellent Faceplant Belgian Tripel. Discover truth in adversing with that particular brew and/or sample *Star Wars*-themed beers when It's a Tap transforms the joint into Mos Eisley Cantina *(Episode IV: A New Hope)*. Specialty pizzas and *Stars Wars* movies are served all day.

It's a Tap at Pizza Port San Clemente, 301 N. El Camino Real, San Clemente, (949) 940-0005, pizzaport.com/brewpubs/san-clemente. Sun., 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Free. —MATT COKER


PEGGY SIROTA

[PERFORMING ARTS]

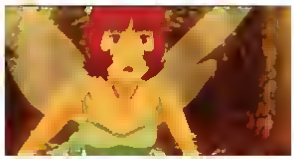
The Music Man

Mandy Patinkin: Diaries

While he may have stolen hearts as Inigo Montoya in *The Princess Bride* ("You killed my father, prepare to die") and brought suspense to the small screen in *Homeland*, Mandy Patinkin's less-talked-about gig is that of singer. The Tony Award-winning performer offers an entire evening of songs and storytelling called *Diaries*, with several favorites from Broadway and classic American songs, as well as his own material. In between, the veteran stage and screen star will regale audiences by detailing his personal connection and affinity for each song choice, whether it's a classic Stephen Sondheim number or by Rufus Wainwright. We hear tickets are selling fast for this one, so don't miss this exclusive one-night show, featuring Adam Ben-David on piano.

Mandy Patinkin: Diaries at Musco Center for the Arts, 415 N. Glassell, Orange, (844) 626-8726, muscocenter.org. 4 p.m. $63-$113. —AIMEE MURILLO

mon/11/25


COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT JAPAN

[FILM]

In Dreams

Paprika

Satoshi Kon's mind-bending 2006 anime feature is among the writer/director's most well-known works, and it's regarded as one of the highest-grossing films from the Madhouse Production company. Its surreal plot concerns a future psychological research experiment in which scientists develop a device called the DC Mini that allows the user to peer into someone's dreams. Dr. Atsuko Chiba, under the dream alias Paprika, illegally uses the DC Mini to help psychiatric patients, one of whom is Detective Konakawa, who has been troubled by a recurring dream. The DC Mini is stolen one day for nefarious purposes, threatening the integrity of the research project, and the team must confront their own subconsciouses to thwart the evil forces behind the theft. Kon's final film before his passing in 2010 gets the big-screen treatment this week at the Frida.

Paprika at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Ste. 100, Santa Ana, (714) 285-9422, thefridacinema.org. 2:30, 6 & 8:30 p.m., also Tues.-Wed. $7.50-$10.50. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/11/26

[ART]

THE WILDERNESS BEFORE YOU

'360° Azimuth'

For the first time in seven years, the commissioned art installation for Laguna Art Museum's Art and Nature Fest isn't outside on Main Beach. Yorgo Alexopoulos' "360° Azimuth" has taken over the museum's largest gallery, bringing the outdoors in with a wallop. The wider-than-wide screen video installation utilizes two synced projectors for lush views of nature processed via a new(ish) medium; here, landscapes are symbolic of the human need to explain the inexplicable. With any film frame, photograph, painting or drawing in his studio archive, the LA-based artist incorporates CGI, motorized movement and Euclidean symbols to make "360° Azimuth" dazzle with shifting color and gobs of wonderment.

"360° Azimuth" at Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach, (949) 494-8971, lagunaartmuseum.org. 11 a.m. Through Jan. 5, 2020. $5-$7. —LISA BLACK

wed/11/27

COURTESY OF THE AQUADOLLS

[CONCERT]

SINGING THEIR FEELINGS

The Aquadolls

Among the many Burger Records bands of the past 10 years, the Aquadolls are arguably among the most popular, thanks to their effervescent California girl energy and upbeat surf pop/alt-rock sound. The all-female group from La Mirada will likely draw comparisons to similar girl groups such as Vivian Girls, La Sera, Bleached or Peach Kelli Pop, but the Aquadolls have always stood out with direct, playful lyrics and pop-punk sensibilities. Adding another member to the mix, they're now collaborating on ideas for new songs, including the recently released "Suck On This." The future looks bright for these rock & roll mermaids, so make the most out of seeing them live while you can.

The Aquadolls with the Gems and the Side Eyes at the Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. $12. —AIMEE MURILLO

[NIGHTLIFE]

No Cooking Required

Friendsgiving

For those of you dreading the Thanksgiving holiday, the one thing you might possibly be thankful for is the four-day weekend ahead. Kick it off right with this banger of a party, courtesy of your friends at the Copper Door. Tonight's Friendsgiving show will be one for the books, with DJ One Dye spinning classic to current hip-hop and dance songs you can shake your tail feather to. And, of course, the Copper Door will offer its usual supply of craft cocktails, wine and beers to sip on and off the dance floor; bottle service is also available if you're thinking about making it a big gathering this year. Invite all your closest pals, and RSVP for one of the last big shindigs of 2019!

Friendsgiving at the Copper Door, 225 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, (714) 696-1479, thecopperdoorbar.com. 9 p.m. Free with RSVP. 21+. —AIMEE MURILLO

thu/11/28

[HEALTH & FITNESS]

Sun Salutations

Yin Yoga on the Beach

Even if you're one of the lucky 20 percent of people who don't spend the Thanksgiving holiday with nosy in-laws or cranky house guests, approaching a day such as this requires a certain level of mindfulness and pause. That's why we recommend checking out Yin Yoga on the Beach. This great event takes place at Tower 14 every day, even Thanksgiving. All levels of yogi are welcome to this endurance and focus-building practice within view of the Pacific Ocean. Make sure to bring layers of clothes, your own yoga mat, towel, water, sunglasses and sunscreen. Kids are welcome, too!

Yin Yoga on the Beach at Tower 14 at Huntington Beach, Pacific Coast Highway and 14th Street, Huntington Beach, www.facebook.com/yogaonthebeachhuntingtonbeach. 9 a.m. Donations welcome. —AIMEE MURILLO

COURTESY OF THE DANA POINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

[HEALTH & FITNESS]

THANKSGIVING CARDIO

Dana Point Turkey Trot

Let's face it: Between all the turkey, stuffing and pies Thanksgiving is an unavoidable carb blowout. But don't let the gravy get you down. Burn some calories before the big feast by lining up for the Dana Point Turkey Trot. The 42-year-old tradition offers early-morning 10K and 5K races, as well as a kids "gobble wobble." Wear your first bib of the day and get those legs moving. The Turkey Trot's trail is flat and scenic—unlike your bloated belly later that day!

Dana Point Turkey Trot at Golden Lantern and Dana Point Harbor Drive, Dana Point, (949) 496-1565, turkeytrot.com. 7 a.m. $25-$62. —GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

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Kyouten/Heaven's Echo has an alcohol content of 35 percent, or 70 proof. When selecting the right brands for the U.S. market, approximately 300 kinds were used for tasting before Kyouten was finally selected. It's best on the rocks or in a cocktail.

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- Dec. 21 (Sat.), 2-5 p.m. at Total Wine & More – Newport Beach
- Dec. 26 (Thurs.), 3-6 p.m. at Pavilions – Irvine store
- Dec. 28 (Sat.), 2-5 p.m. at Total Wine & More – Newport Beach

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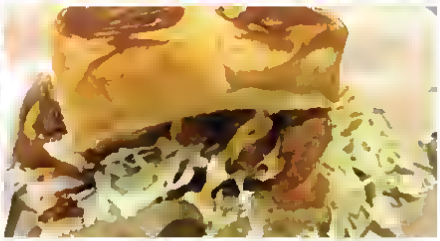

PHOTOS BY EDWIN GOEI

Shaka Shack

Faka's Island Grill brings the Aloha to 4th Street Market

BY EDWIN GOEI

A scoop of rice. Macaroni salad. Fried chicken. Disassemble a typical Hawaiian plate lunch to its components and you're left with things that, by themselves, aren't very special. But put them together in a clamshell container, and something magical happens. They let you relive past Hawaiian vacations as if they are the Pensieve in *Harry Potter*, bringing back a flood of happy thoughts in a way that flipping through photos never could.

Vacation nostalgia is the most potent flavor in a Hawaiian plate lunch. The L&L chain and other similar takeout joints on the mainland know they're not just selling food; they're selling memories. L&L uses posters of Hawaiian surf competitions to help set the mood. Some play Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's *Facing Future* CD on a loop.

Dave Faka, owner of the new Faka's Island Grill at Santa Ana's 4th Street Market, has neither the room for posters nor a sound system since taking over the stall that was formerly Graze. But he, too, is out to remind you of the good times you spent in paradise. And more than any other vendor, he does it with his food. Faka serves several plate lunches, but the one called "Surf N Chick" triggered a tsunami of flashbacks. There's the garlic shrimp I had from that truck no the North Shore of Oahu and the crispy chicken katsu from a hole-in-the-wall takeout place in Honokowai that I ate on my hotel room's balcony.

And with this plate lunch, I noticed something different, something a little more gourmet. Faka added special touches his competitors wouldn't bother with. He buttered the sticky rice and sprinkled it with furikake. He dusted the mac salad with red pepper so thickly it resembled a Kilauea eruption. And in between the Styrofoam compartments, he crammed chunks of curried pineapple that recalled my trip to the Dole Plantation and the sugary, juicy samples of the fruit I had there. Most of all, I realized Faka's garlic shrimp was better than that North Shore food truck's; he layered on the minced garlic so generously the shrimp wore it as a coat. The sauce that enrobed each shell-on crustacean was a bona-fide emulsion, an upgrade from Giovanni's greasy slick of olive oil that happens to have garlic in it.

Faka's chicken katsu was also exemplary—a crispy, juicy benchmark against which others should be compared. The panko crust tasted buttery without using butter, and the meat was gristle-free despite being dark meat. I couldn't ask for a better plate lunch or a more authentic person to make it for me than Faka himself. With an outward appearance of a rough-and-tumble rugby player, the man is actually a gentle giant. He was all grins when he told me he'd been operating his eatery as a pop-up inside another restaurant in Covina when the opportunity to move into this stall opened up. His San Gabriel Valley fan base is sure to follow him, if they haven't already.

It's because of his easygoing "shaka" charm that I can forgive the messy pork-belly sandwich Faka constructed with four unbroken King's Hawaiian rolls. He split the bread, stuffing it with slaw and small pieces of belly. While they were supposed to function individually as sliders, the braised pork was still a little chewy.

Faka redeemed himself with a Spam taco—a dish over which I had doubts, but it turned out to be the best thing he makes. Rather than pan-searing, Faka cocooned the slices of processed meat in panko, plunged them in oil for a quick fry, then wrapped lightly fried corn tortillas around the spears. The result could stand as an offering to Pele. After I breached the crunchy outer crust, the Spam melted in my mouth and tasted like the best version of itself, its saltiness balanced by the sweetness of Faka's mango pico de gallo and shredded cabbage. A flurry of cotija and a squirt of a sauce called "Faka'n Awesome" completed a fusion taco that could give Kogi a run for its money. After I inhaled the first, I immediately ordered a second.

As with all plate-lunch purveyors, I should note that Faka also boasted a complete collection of Hawaiian Sun beverages. And when I washed down my plate lunch and tacos with a sip from a can of punch with the word *lilikoi* on it, my trip back to Aloha memory lane was complete—which is good because I'm fresh out of vacation days.

FAKA S ISLAND GRILL
201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (628) 346-7444, fakasislandgrill.com. Open daily, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Tacos, $2.50; saadwiches, $6-$8.50; plate lunches, $9.50-$14. No alcohol.

WHAT THE ALE
» GREG NAGEL

The Beer Hall We Need

It seems crazy to open a taproom within steps of some of the best breweries in the area, but on Howell Avenue in Anaheim, not far from Noble Ale Works and Anaheim Stadium, we were picking from 40 taps of beer from throughout California as though we were kids in a candy store.

During the soft opening for Red Beards Taproom, most of the tap list revolved around India Pale Ales in one form or another; there are hazies from San Diego, West Coast styles from up north, and even some freshies from down the street. Eight wines are available on tap, plus there are more by the bottle, each showcasing a sense of place.

The long, marble, L-shaped bar envelops the beefy, red, tap tube wall, and four screens sit readily above it to entice you into something new—and sports, of course. The tables resemble bowling alley lanes, complete with arrows and dots; local artists' works hang nearby, with a convenient QR code should you want to purchase a piece that speaks to you.

Owners Scott Nelson and Al Pirruccello have been general contractors and friends for more than 35 years. Around five years ago, they were enjoying a beer and sharing the thought that life was short, which led to "let's open up a taproom and do this," recalls Nelson.

As of press time, the taps lean heavily on Craft Beer Guild and Stone Distributing brews, "but I go down to San Diego at least twice a week to pick up fresh kegs from breweries we love," Nelson says. "With this taproom, our goal is to give you a good experience, telling you about the brewery you got the beer from," Nelson says. "[It's] not just about drinking a beer, but why it's here and who's at that brewery that's doing such a good job."

RED BEARDS TAPROOM
2120 E. Howell Ave., Anaheim, (714) 758-5823; redbeardstaproom.com.

GREG NAGEL

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OC WEEKLY'S CURATION OF THE LATEST FOOD & DRINK NEWS OF THE WEEK, COMPLETE WITH RESTAURANT REVIEWS & EVENT PICKS

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ERIN DEWITT

A New Breakfast Burrito in Town

And we're hoping Blue Burro stays awhile

Seemingly inexplicably, the corner spot in an otherwise-busy shopping center at the PCH/Bellflower/Seventh St. intersection has a high turnover rate. In less than two years, the space at 5726 E. Seventh St. has been a chicken-wings place and an organic tacos and tortas eatery (the latter claims that not enough foot traffic caused its closure). Given the college-adjacent location and always-bustling neighboring spaces such as Afters Ice Cream, Cha for Tea and Target, it's with cautious optimism that we hope newcomer Blue Burro will stick.

The interior setup remains the same as the previous few concepts: order at the counter, then choose a table in the small dining area off to the side. Blue Burro stays ultra-dedicated to its theme with the same shade of bright, cheerful blue throughout, dotted with whimsical portraits of donkeys and large-scale quirky sayings such as "Burritos Are Life" and "You're My Boy Blue."

Blue Burro offers healthy-ish Mexican comfort food, advertising that its "burritos, shakes and fries" are made from "only the freshest ingredients." The salsas and agua frescas are from scratch, though it's worth noting the signature beverage, the blue horchata (which comes as either paleta, milkshake or agua fresca), is colored a bright robin's-egg shade of blue. It's a smooth, sweet horchata, with a strong wave of cinnamon coming through after the first sip of vanilla rice flavor. The staff will happily allow you to sample the other rainbow-hued beverages, the employee I ordered from suggested the bright-pink strawberry agua fresca, which was his favorite (and now maybe mine, too), which tasted like a grown-up version of that childhood delicacy strawberry Quik.

LongBeachLunch

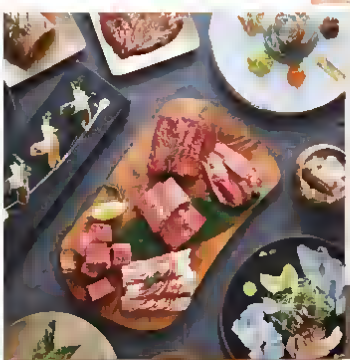
» ERIN DEWITT

Besides the very photographable neon-blue dessert the owners seemed to base their concept around (though it must be noted that neighbor Afters already has a well-known ice cream flavor in the same shade), what's going to make Blue Burro stand out? For starters, it serves breakfast burritos all day. And in a town that goes nuts for breakfast burritos, with dedicated rankings of the city's best, Blue Burro enters the game swinging with California-style offerings: a massive, papery soft tortilla barely holds an assortment of fluffy eggs, sharp cheese, salty proteins and French fries. Add a drizzle of one of those house-made salsas, and yeah, it's worth driving across town for—especially when you consider the just-more-than-$5 price tag.

There are lighter menu items such as salads (the Surf-N-Turf salad is composed of grilled shrimp, angus steak, romaine lettuce, salsa fresca, special sauce and cotija) and rolled tacos. Served in quantities of either three or five, Blue Burro's rolled tacos are crispy fried taquitos filled with shredded beef that are then hurled beneath a pile of shredded romaine, guacamole, sour cream, cheese, salsa and a sprinkle of cotija. It's a beautifully layered mess that begs to be eaten with a fork.

With craveable burritos, social media-worthy neon-hued drinks and a menu with items costing well less than $10, we're betting Blue Burro manages to stay awhile.

BLUE BURRO
5726 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, (562) 498-0287, www.eatblueburro.com



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PHOTOS BY GREG NAGEL

Surviving the Flood

Lido Bottle Works' wine and beer dinner series

One chilly Wednesday night, sitting next to billion-dollar boats large enough to carry elephants, I've just finished course No. 5 at Lido Bottle Works' Alpha Omega wine dinner when it feels as if my stomach has become a Babylonian flood vessel. I've consumed a myriad of God's creatures—lobster, quail, swordfish, venison, a smidge of pork rillette—and dessert, each masterfully paired with a gorgeous wine. And five glasses in, I quietly wonder what ocean animals did during the biblical age of Noah's Ark, then quickly gain comfort knowing they probably had a *Little Mermaid*-style party under da sea, complete with steel drums.

I don't normally finish all the things at any beer or wine dinner, as that tends to be 50 times my USDA daily allowance of fat, salt, calories and booze. But when it's all this outstanding, the proverbial steel drums that pound in my head take over, and the plates get taken away clean.

Lido Bottle Works has these special pairing events regularly, letting executive chef Amy Lebrun break out of her shell—not only culinary-wise, but also socially. "I tend to be quite happy back in the kitchen and don't really come out to talk much, but I'm getting used to it with these dinners," she says, holding up a glass of a wildly aromatic Sauvignon Blanc from Alpha Omega, which is located around 15 miles north of Napa proper.

The restaurant sits directly on Newport Harbor in the quaint Lido Marina Village, where a wooden walkway makes way for Duffy boat slips and a view of the waveless water. The dining room resembles the inside of a boat, and the bar services both inside and the outdoor patio with a great local beer list and a fun selection of wines. Being a bottle shop as well, Lido Bottle Works' back cooler is filled with bottles and cans of coastal craft beers from the likes of Gunwhale and others.

I truly didn't expect to see a giant spiked lobster freshly caught by the Santa Barbara dory fleet sitting on a plate, its 6-inch antenna so big it could possibly pick up local HD stations. Each dish and wine selection in the meal built upon the last; by the time dessert hit, I felt as if I had achieved a new level of enlightenment.

The beer and wine purveyors that collaborate with Lido Bottle Works are also at the top of their game. Alpha Omega's wines are bold and complex, but also fine-tuned toward a California palate. They're also highly rated and a bit spendy. But from the rosé to the Chardonnay to the Cab, each one spoke my language.

Check out the restaurant's website to see which event is next in the series!

LIDO BOTTLE WORKS
3408 Via Oporto, Ste. 103, Newport Beach, (949) 529-2784, lidobottleworks.com

Eat & Drink This Now

» GREG NAGEL

While the Tasting Room of our friends at **Blinking Owl Distillery** is closed (and you can read all about why it's closed on their website. blinkingowldistillery.com), we are well stocked with their tasty distillates and have them for sale online and in our store!

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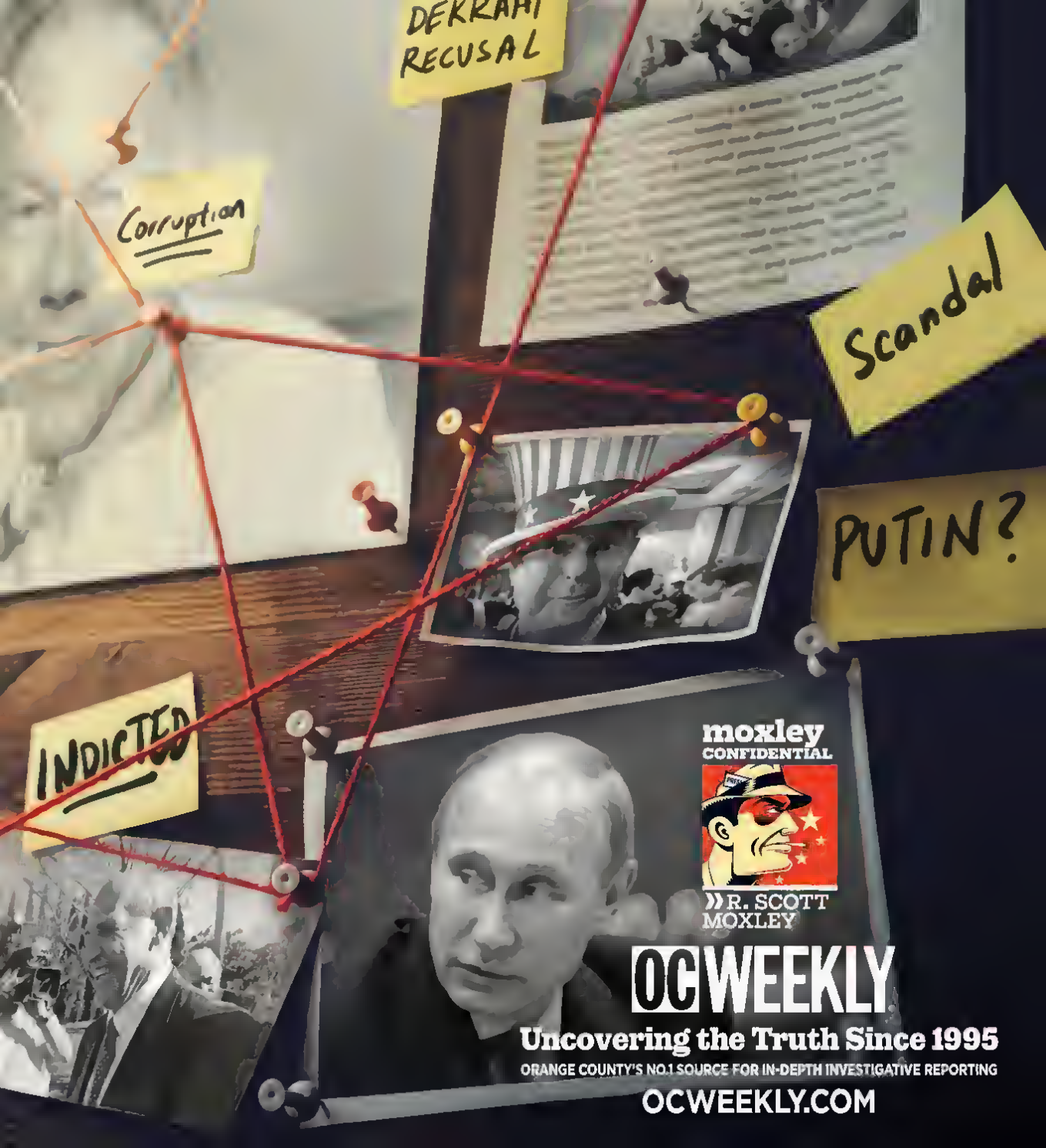
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Best Buds Forever

Good Girls Get High's reefer madness lights up the teen-comedy genre

BY AIMEE MURILLO

It seems like as long as there are teens, there will always be movies about them that hope to channel the angst and anxiety about fitting in, looking cool or attracting that hot peer in their science class they're prone to. The teen-comedy genre has its tropes neatly delineated for others to follow, but Laura Terruso's silly and surprising *Good Girls Get High* is a refreshing entry that pivots away from many of those conventions while still having a good time.

Much of the film's success is attributed to main characters Sam and Danielle, whose wide-eyed ascent into reefer madness is both hilarious and unpredictable. It begins with valedictorian Sam (Abby Quinn) recording a video message to Harvard University that explains why she turned down an offer to enroll for the fall despite getting accepted, as well as why she regrets that decision and is now begging to be let in. Her narration carries over into the film, in which she dishes on herself and her best friend, Danielle (Stefanie Scott), and their world. The two besties are as nerdy as they come. They're both valedictorians of their graduating class and don't have much of a social life beyond hanging out every Friday night with their pizza-delivery friend, Ken (Miles McKenna), and watching documentaries. Sam is the award-winning science student, while Danielle leads the debate team and poetry club.

Sam also describes her father (Matt Besser) and his ice-cream store, which is in dire straits, thanks to the trendy guy who opens up shop next door and serves scoops in a unicorn costume. It's because of their financial instability that Sam decides to forgo her Harvard dreams, and her decision knocks Danielle off the school's waitlist and into acceptance—much to Sam's chagrin, as she was hoping to attend state college with her best friend. We're also introduced to a slew of side characters, such as the perfect school couple Ashanti (Chanté Adams) is an Instagram influencer, while Jeremy (Booboo Stewart), who is also Danielle's crush, is an avant-garde performance artist whose medium is social media and crafting clever commentaries on the digital world and society (this is demonstrated later by his spray-painting "CAPITALISM" on the side of his Hummer—I'm suffocating on irony here).

Sam and Danielle, for the most part, seem utterly comfortable within their social standing at school (save for the tremendously cliched frat-boy-type bullies who gloat whenever they knock the girls' books out of their hands) until they open the yearbook and see they were voted "Biggest Good Girls." Their egos shaken, the two are determined to live out their wild, bad-girl sides to break out of that title before they become branded with it for life. Luckily—and by some bizarre, cosmic coincidence—Sam discovers a joint hidden in her dad's laundry, which becomes her and Danielle's gateway into the strangest sojourn of their young lives.

Also notable are turns by Danny Pudi as Mr. D, Sam's science teacher, whom she has a crush on (and fantasizes about in his underwear floating among clouds), and Lauren Lapkus as a pregnant cop, who has a meaningful role as an unexpected ally.

Good Girls Get High isn't nearly as lewd as *Superbad*, as uplifting as *Booksmart* or as sexy as the Aubrey Plaza-starring *The To Do List*, but Terruso (and co-screenwriter Jennifer Nashorn Blankenship) make sure to carefully steer clear of including too many cliched plot devices and instead focus on the freewheeling experience of two best friends getting high for the first time. The co-writers prioritize making Sam and Danielle strong individuals in their own right with a solid friendship, while not making nearly every other character a tired archetype. Quinn and Scott both seem extremely game for performing some of the most humiliating scenes, so the ribald fun and humor stand out, and as a result, their friendship comes off as natural and genuine.

Thankfully, the film doesn't add to the list of stereotypes employed by countless old-school "getting high" movies (no Alice B. Toklas brownie freakouts here). *Good Girls Get High* is modern enough for the current crop of teenagers to relate to, while its message of friendship secures its longevity for generations to follow.

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

GOOD GIRLS GET HIGH **was directed by Laura Terruso, written by Laura Terruso and Jennifer Nashorn Blankenship, and stars Abby Quinn and Stefanie Scott.**

Special Screenings

» MATT COKER

The Irishman. Martin Scorsese's new crime bio-drama is based on *I Heard You Paint Houses*, Charles Brandt's biography on Frank "The Irishman" Sheeran. Both are about a colorful mob hitman (Robert De Niro) recalling his possible involvement in the slaying of Teamsters boss Jimmy Hoffa (Al Pacino). *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, 25471 Rancho Niguel Rd., Laguna Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Thurs., Nov. 21, 11 a.m., 3:15 & 7:30 p.m. $9.50-$12.50; also at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, thefridacinema.org. Wed., 11:30 a.m., 2:30, 3:30 & 7:30 p.m., Thurs., Nov. 28, noon $7.50-$10.50; and the Art Theatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435. Wed.-Thurs., Nov. 28, 2:15 & 6:30 p.m. $9-$12.*

The Fare. D.C. Hamilton's 2018 mystery-thriller is about a cabbie (Gino Anthony Pesi) who falls for a fare (Brinna Kelly), but she vanishes once the ride ends. When he resets the meter, she reappears and their romance continues. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 2, 4 & 6 p.m. $7.50-$10.50.*

The Living Dead at Manchester Morgue. A murder investigation in rural England leads to the discovery that farmers have been using an alternative to pesticide that raises the dead. Who funded Spanish director Jorge Grau's 1974 zombie flick? Monsanto? The cult classic, presented by Horrible Imaginings, has been restored in 4K. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 10 p.m. $7.50-$10.50.*

The Portal. Years ago, I attended a transcendental meditation event in Orange, and the speaker said if 3 million people around the world meditated for peace at the same moment, whichever Middle East quagmire we were in at the time would end. Jacqui Fifer's new documentary suggests if 7 billion people meditated, the trajectory of the planet could shift. An audience Q&A follows with Tom Cronin, executive producer of the film and creator of the Stillness Project. *Art Theatre, (562) 438-5435. Sat.-Sun., 11 a.m. $9-$10.*

Ulysses & Mona. Sébastien Betbeder's 2018 French drama is about a meeting between a reclusive retired artist (Eric Cantona) and a young art student (Manal Issa) that changes the lives of both. *Dana Point Library, 33841 Niguel Rd., Dana Point, (949) 496-5517. Sun., 2 p.m. Free.*

A Prayer Beyond Borders. Atif Khan and Reynaldo Escoto's new documentary is about the sacred gathering space Muslims and Christians created at the southern U.S. border so families separated by U.S. immigration policies can meet. UC Irvine professor Sherine Hamdy, who teaches "Islam in America," leads the discussion that follows with executive producer Dustin Cram. *UC Irvine, Humanities Center, ALP 1700, Irvine, (949) 824-6117. Tues., 9:30 a.m. Free.*

Homework. Docutight: Iranian Documentary Series presents Abbas Kiarostami's 1989 film that was sparked by his son's difficulties in completing homework. That prompted the filmmaker to ask male students at a local school about their homework woes. A discussion follows the film. *UCI, McCormick Screening Room, Humanities Gateway 1070, Irvine, bit.ly/UCIHomework. Tues., 6:30 p.m. Free, but RSVP required.*

Never Surrender: A Galaxy Quest Documentary. How did *Galaxy Quest* survive a set fire, the loss of a powerful director and a studio that did not understand the 1999 spoof of sci-fi TV shows? Jack Bennett's new documentary answers that while exploring the comedy's enduring appeal. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com Tues., 7 p.m. $15.*

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A Fan Story

Remembering when the ROQ was a hard place

BY POORMAN

Having been in the radio game for a long time, there's no escaping the occasional psycho fan. Every entertainer has dealt with them. It can be a very delicate situation.

There is one crazed fan who stands out in my career. I don't have any idea what I did *on* and off the air that triggered her. It might be the result of me being an open, friendly guy and making myself too accessible. Here is the story. In respect for her safety (and mine), I am changing her name slightly.

In the early to mid-1980s while no KROQ, I had a rough ordeal for more than a year dealing with a 15-year-old girl who somehow developed a fixation through listening to me on the air. That was okay, but what was not okay was her resultant behavior. It was quite disturbing as well as very traumatic. She would show up unexpectedly at locations where I was working—and even at my home. It was more disturbing that she would arrive with razor blades and slash her wrists in front of me. I have very vivid memories of incidents involving "Suicidal Samantha," some of which I'll recount below.

When I was doing the all-night DJ shift at KROQ, our office was on the second floor of an ugly building at 117 S. Los Robles Ave., Pasadena. On the first floor was a business called the Uniform Circus. At night, the front door to the building was locked, so we would go around the back of the building and up wrought-iron steps to a small metal platform surrounded by graffiti that had been spray-painted on the back brick wall. There, we let ourselves in through a thick, locked metal door with our company key. Visitors would ring the back-door buzzer and identify themselves through an intercom.

On several occasions, Samantha showed up and rang the buzzer, and there she'd be with blood-crusted wrists and blades. She lived in Orange County and would take the bus by herself to Pasadena. She was very quiet and petite, maybe 5-foot-1 and 100 pounds, pale, and always wearing a purple windbreaker. She was a fan of Duran Duran, and when she did speak, it was softly with an affected English accent. After she would arrive, I'd let her into the building—where I was broadcasting alone, usually—and ask Samantha to give me the razor blades as well as her parents' phone number. This was way before personal computers, cellphones and social media. She was always very cooperative and compliant. She would sit in the studio while I phoned her mother, letting her know that her daughter was at KROQ after midnight. Her mom would then drive from OC to pick up Samantha. The mother was very pleasant and thanked me on every occasion. She also did not seem shocked that this was happening. It was almost as if she had dealt with this kind of behavior before with Samantha.

Samantha also found out somehow where I lived. I'll never forget looking out the window of my beach pad on 26th Street in Newport Beach on a hot, 90-degree summer day and seeing Samantha in her purple windbreaker peering into my house from across the street. At the time, Dr. Drew Pinsky was visiting me. Samantha was standing there for maybe an hour before she suddenly walked up to the door. I don't remember if she knocked or rang the doorbell, but when the door opened, she held out her arms. They were streaming with blood from freshly slashed wrists. Dr. Drew took her into my house and treated her wounds. He put her arms under the faucet in my kitchen. Thank God the cuts weren't too deep. They never were. After we removed the razor blades from her person and Dr. Drew put bandages on her wrists, I phoned her mother once again, explained what had happened and asked her to pick up Samantha. I'm sure we tried our best to explain the value of life. The wait until mom arrived seemed like an eternity.

Samantha would also show up at public venues. One chilling time, I was hosting a nighttime gig inside Knott's Berry Farm with several DJs at Cloud 9, an all-ages dance-and-music venue. There must have been 5,*000* people in the crowd. Resident DJ "Hot Toddy" got on the mic and told the crowd, "Here's the Poorman from KROQ!" The crowd went nuts, and I approached the stage. Right before I hopped up to greet everyone, Suicidal Samantha emerged from the shadows in her purple jacket and said in her soft, English-accented voice, "Here, I want you to have these." She then placed a collection of five well-worn razor blades into the palm of my hand. Ten seconds later, I was waving to the crowd onstage, freaked out. I did not see her again that night.

The good news is Samantha has reached out to me on several occasions during the 30-something years since that time. She obviously never committed suicide. She even Facebook friended me several years ago. I didn't accept, possibly worried something might start again. I'm sure a psychologist would have an insight as to what a 15-year-old girl was dealing with at the time. In all honesty, at this point in my life, I would talk to her and wish her the best. I am curious to see how her life has evolved.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

Poorman's Morning Rush *is on KOCI-FM 101.5 weekdays, 7 to 10 a.m. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255*

ARTSOVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

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SANTA CLAUS SKYDIVES ONTO HUNTINGTON BEACH—Ol' Saint Nick and a couple of elves descend on Pacific City via parachute, followed by photo ops, holiday caroling and giveaways. Sat., noon. Free. RSVP recommended. Pacific City, 21010 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (714) 930-2345, www.gopacificity.com.

"INSTRUMENTS OF CHANGE: AN EXPLORATION OF LATIN AMERICAN MURALS"—Eight different site-specific works will be created at Fullerton Museum by visiting artists from different parts of Latin America. Open Tues.-Wed., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Thurs., 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Fri.-Sun., noon-4 p.m. Through Feb. 23, 2020. $3-$5. Fullerton Museum, 301 N. Pomona Ave., Fullerton, (714) 738-6545, www.cityoffullerton.com.

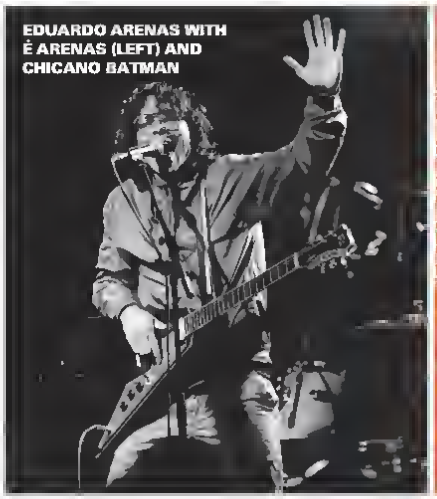
"SILVER"—The group exhibition celebrates photojournalism, surrealism, abstraction and other genres that employ black-and-white analog photography. Open Mon.-Thurs., 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Through Jan. 11. Free. Irvine Fine Arts Center, 14321 Yale Ave., Irvine, (949) 724-6880, cityofirvine.org.

"LOS ANGELES AREA SCENE PAINTINGS"—More than 70 works from various California artists, spanning from the 1900s to today, represent the changing face of Los Angeles. Open Thurs.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Through May 2, 2020. Free. Hilbert Museum, 167 N. Atchison St., Orange, (714) 516-5880, hilbertmuseum.org.

"INSPIRED 2019: THE SIXTH ANNUAL ARTIST COUNCIL EXHIBITION"—This juried show by artists in the Huntington Beach Art Center Artist Council offers works ranging from photography to mixed media to assemblage. Open Tues.-Thurs., noon-8 p.m., Fri.-Sun., noon-5 p.m., Sat., noon-5 p.m. Through Dec. 14. Free. Huntington Beach Art Center, 538 Main St., Huntington Beach, (714) 374-1650, www.huntingtonbeachartcenter.org.

OCEANFRONT THANKSGIVING FEAST—Skip the holiday-morning kitchen chaos and instead enjoy a full buffet with three carving stations, a fresh oyster bar and other traditional favorites. Thurs., Nov. 28, noon-4 p.m. $30-$80. Pasea Hotel & Spa, 21080 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (855) 638-6371, nightout.com/events/thanksgiving-at-pasea-hotel-spa-2019.

MOONLIGHT MADNESS SHOPPING PARTY—The Outlets at San Clemente will be open for shopping, plus a chance to win a $1,000 holiday spree. DJs will spin music for guests to dance to, while drinks will be available for purchase. Thurs., Nov. 28, 7 p.m.-midnight. Outlets at San Clemente, 101 W. Avenida Vista Hermosa, San Clemente, (949) 535-2323, outletssanclamante.com.


EDUARDO ARENAS WITH É ARENAS (LEFT) AND CHICANO BATMAN

LEFT PHOTO BY DAVID RODRIGUEZ/RIGHT COURTESY OF RED LIGHT MANAGEMENT

From *Cumbias* to *Comida*

Chicano Batman's Eduardo Arenas on preserving Latin music and food

BY NELSON RODRIGUEZ

Eduardo Arenas performed double duty at the third-annual Tropicália Festival at the Pomona Fairplex, where his solo project É Arenas appeared on opening day, Nov 9, and his band Chicano Batman co-headlined the second day. We recently chatted with the bassist about his musical origins, influences and food.

OC WEEKLY: *Where are you from, what are your musical influences, and when did you know music was the passion you wanted to pursue?*

EDUARDO ARENAS: I'm from Los Angeles, I'm from Boyle Heights. When I was a kid, I grew up around a musical family. My uncles played *norteñas*, *corridos*, *cumbias* and ballads like a typical *grupera* band, which played mainly *quinceaneras*, baptisms and house parties. I would kick it with them when I was 5 or 6, and they would be listening to Los Bukis, Los Temerarios, Bronco and stuff like that. So when I was a kid, I had an affinity for that, for the rhythm of music. And I maintained that through my childhood, my love for music, theough Vicente Fernandez, Bukis and all that sort of thing. So when it was my turn to seek out the music that I wanted to hear and could buy my owo stuff, I went for White Zombie, Metallica, Slayer, Pantera. You know, those are my tools of aggression to kind of find my voice. So I pretty much sought metal from [ages] 12 to 13 years up until I was in college.

I read somewhere that at some point, you ended up traveling to Solvador, Brazil, and thot's when you discovered Tropicália music?

Oh, yeah, I lived there for a year. That's definitely when I got into Tropicália music. I went to Brazil without knowing a single thing. I didn't even know who Stan Getz and João Gilberto were, and they pretty much launched the bossa nova movement [into the U.S.] through their 1964 album *Getz/Gilberto*. From there, I heard a David Byrne collection of Brazilian classics, and then I heard some Jorge Ben and Caetano Veloso—not a lot of really deep stuff, just more generic, like MPB [Musica Popular Brasileira]. So I would go to this one record store where the CDs were $5 each, and this guy would recommend which ones I should get. The first CD I ever bought in Brazil was called *Transa* by Caetano Veloso.

That's really cool. What inspired this trip to Brazil?

Well, when I was in college, I was about to graduate, but I said I'm not ready for the world yet. So I dropped my last class so I wouldn't graduate, then I got financial aid to study abroad in Brazil. So I basically took a semester to study geography and music in Brazil.

Then you returned from Brazil and ended up graduating?

Yeah, I studied urban planning at USC. So after Brazil and after graduating, I landed a job working for the city of Huntington Park and ended up working in the Community Development Department for five years.

Do you think your time as an urban planner influenced your music or any themes you touch on?

Well, interestingly, I travel all over the country visiting different cities, so I'm kind of an urban planner still—planning the social scene of rhythm and harmony in cities.

How would you describe your sound as É Arenas to a newcomer?

My first album was super-rhythmically introverted and melodically creamy. I think it was my own process of self-development. It took six years to do that, and it's just where I was at the time. But my last couple of 45s have just been straight *Quebradita* mosh pit. There's all these mosh pits at my shows, and I don't know what causes them, but I think it just has to do with the intensity that we play with. We just throw down, and I think we're not doing anything new; we're reinterpreting themes. We're changing the narrative on a lot of stories, but it's music that your *tia* and *tio* can jam to, too.

What's next? Maybe another full-length?

Ah, man, yeah, another full-length! I think the 45s were just another distraction [*laughs*], but there's a lot of work to be done. A lot of self-love, self-reflection, development, growth. Everybody has their own journey, and I think this next group of songs that I have is a lot of twisted Mexican folklore, funk and a lot of experimentation in the studio. I have a studio that I work at where I produce all my own stuff, other artists, and the sky's the limit, really. I keep learning every day.

So this album is already in the works then?

Yeah, I have like five or six songs that I have about ready to go. So I just have to do, like, five more and cut the three crappy ones. But I'm excited. I've been listening to these songs once a week for the last year. Some of them have been around for two years.

You have songs about food that make your listeners—including myself—very nostalgic. One of your songs, "Buñuelos o Monton," talks about being involved in the kitchen to learn recipes before that generation passes away and leaves with them. What are some recipes you've managed to document from your relotives and have possibly mastered yourself?

Man, salsa verde is definitely one that's pretty clutch. I think salsa verde and chilaquiles—definitely chilaquiles, I'm pretty good at that. When you said that, I've been thinking lately of this lomo my mom makes. We call it la bola de carne, it's like a barbacoa. She just makes it so dank, and sometimes you don't want to ask, you just want them to make it for you. But there's that fine line because one day, you're going to have to make that yourself. She'll be gone, and that flavor will be gone, too. Those flavors are history. So I go to Mexico and come back with pinole, crema de coco and all these things that my *tias* are making, and I'm, like, I have no idea how to make this stuff. This is ancestral at this point. You have a lot to look forward to learning and staying curious.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

PAUL KOUDOUNARIS

Friday

THE ASSOCIATION, GUNBOAT KINGS: 8 p.m. $28, all ages. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com.

BELLA NOVELA, LOS MYSTERIOSOS; OEATH VALLEY TRIO: 8 p.m., $10, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 234-8292; alexsbar.com.

MAC SABBATH; 45 GRAVE, TARTAR CONTROL: 8 p.m., $12, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; observatoryoc.com.

SPENOTIME PALACE: 8 p.m., $13, all ages. Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, observatoryoc.com

STRUNG OUT, THE CASUALTIES: 6:30 p.m., $18, all ages. Garden Amp, 12782 Main St., Garden Grove, (949) 415-8544, gardencamp.com

YACHTS BY NATURE: 8 p.m., $10, all ages. Campus Jax, 3950 Campus Dr., Newport Beach, (949) 261-6270; campusjax.com.

Saturday

THE BANOULUS, R-MAN & THE 455, BE LIKE MAX, RUN DOWN KREEPS: 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-7469; slidebarfullerton.com

BITE ME BAMBI; GABRIELA PENKA; COVETED FUTURE: 8 p.m., $12, all ages. Chain Reaction, 1652 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, (714) 535-6067; allages.com

FEAR; SHATTERED FAITH, TWILIGHT CREEPS: 7 p.m., $25-$30, all ages. Gardee Amp; gardeeamp.com

MICKEY AVALON: 8 p.m., $25, 21+. Gallagher's Pub HB, 300 Pacific Coast Hwy., Ste. 113, Huntington Beach, (714) 951-8223; gallagherspubhb.com.

MISTERWIVES, FOREIGN AIR: 8 p.m., $29.50-$104.50, all ages. The Observatory; observatoryoc.com

OPEN REBELLION—ROLLING STONES TRIBUTE: 8 p.m., $10, all ages. Campus Jax; campusjax.com

OZOMATLI, THE ORIGINATORS: 8 p.m., $30, all ages. The Coach House; thecoachhouse.com.

STREET TRASH REUNION AND BENEFIT SHOW, ASSQUATCH; SHARR TOYS: 8 p.m., $10, 21+. Alex's Bar; alexsbar.com

WHITEY MORGAN, ALEX WILLIAMS: 8 p.m., $25, all ages. Yost Theater, 307 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, (714) 542-6050; theyostheater.com.

Sunday

CLOWN SOUNDS, HIT BARGAIN, SHIT GIVER; KILLER DREAMER: 2 p.m., $5, 21+. Alex's Bar; alexsbar.com.

DAX: 9 p.m., $20-$65, all ages. Constellation Room; observatoryoc.com

EDYN, VELVET LUNE, TOPAZ FAERIE, SAULO: 9 p.m., free, 21+. The Continental Room, 115 W. Santa Fe Ave., Fullerton, (714) 526-4529; www.facebook.com/continentalroom.

LVGER, VIS VIRES, DJ MARV MACK, DJ JOHN FOUTS; DJ SHAWN ATKINSON: 8 p.m., $12, 21+. Alex's Bar; alexsbar.com

KATE VOEGELE & TYLER HILTON: 9 p.m., $20, all ages. The Coach House, thecoachhouse.com.

SINATRA BIG BAND WITH MATT MAUSER: 4 p.m., $20-$300, all ages. Campus Jax, campusjax.com.

Monday

MEGA LOW, BILO BRAVO, LISA MANGOURAS: 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; wayfarercm.com.

THANK YOU SCIENTIST: 6:30 p.m., $20, all ages. Constellation Room, observatoryoc.com.

VIRTUAL MEMORY 2, WITH TRUCES PASSING TRUCKS, OATAGIRL, EARTH BOY AOVANCE: 9 p.m., free, 21+. The Continental Room, www.facebook.com/continentalroom.

Tuesday

RAYLA KRAEMER'S ARTIST SHOWCASE: 8 p.m., free, all ages. Campus Jax; campusjax.com.

MARCELLIRA & THE MORARCHS; LILY WATERS; FROSTY: 9 p.m., free, 21+. The Continental Room, www.facebook.com/continentalroom.

MESA'S FINEST: 8 p.m., $12, all ages. Constellation Room; observatoryoc.com

Wednesday

DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING WITH SUBLIME TRIBUTE: 7 p.m., $12, all ages. Gardee Amp; gardeecamp.com.

DEATH BY STEREO, BAD COP/BAD COP: 8:45 p.m., $10, 21+. The Wayfarer; wayfarercm.com

DEORRO: 9 p.m., $45, 21+. Time Nightclub, 1875 Newport Blvd., Ste. B245, Costa Mesa, (949) 722-7103; timenightclub.com.

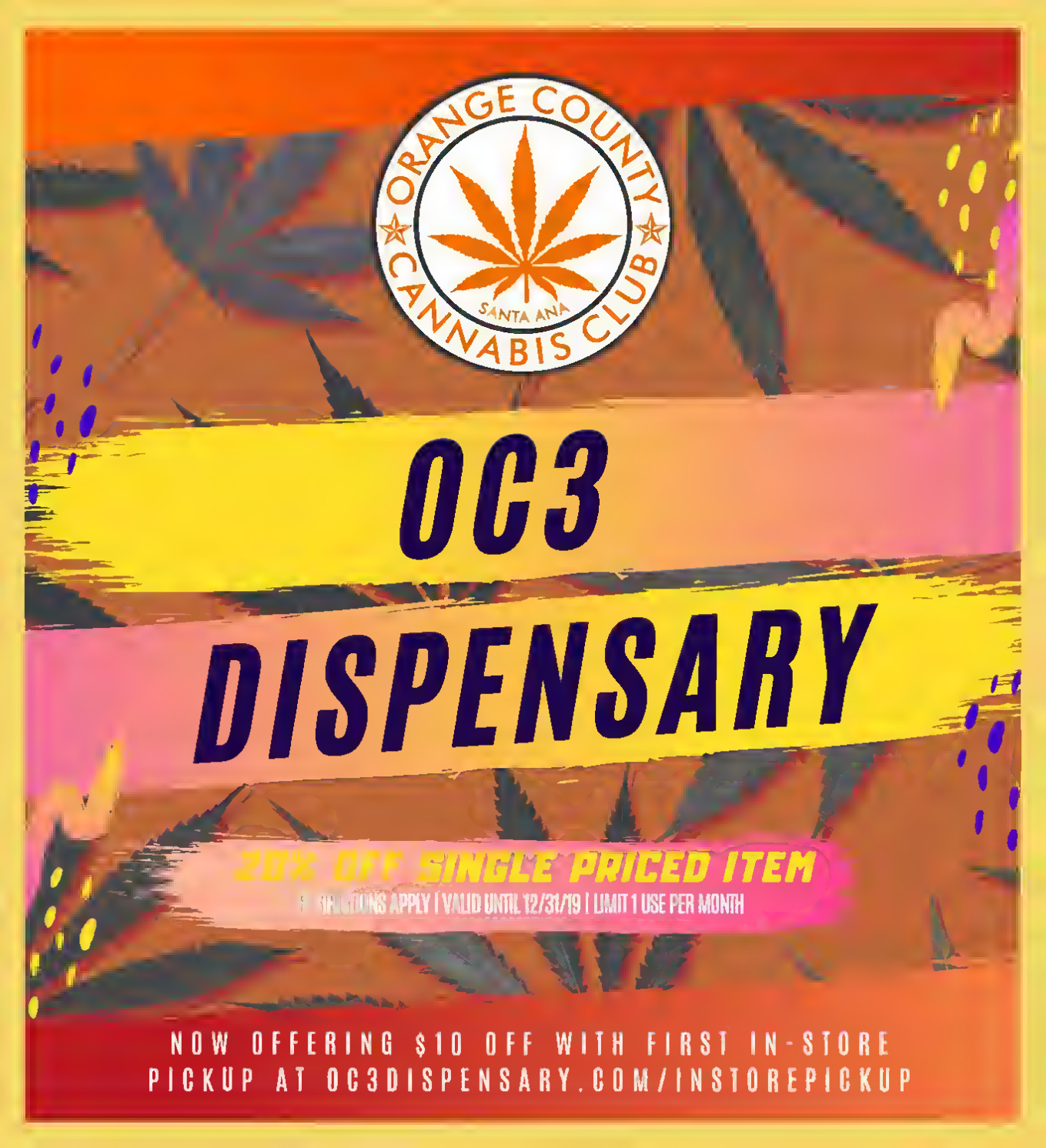
INFLUSDEES: 8 p.m., free, all ages. Campus Jax, campusjax.com.

THE MAINE, WNOHURTYOU, TWIN XL: 8 p.m., $25, all ages. House of Blues, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

MORBIO ANGEL: 8 p.m., $30-$33, all ages. The Observatory; observatoryoc.com.

Thursday, Nov. 28

SHIRA SAN: 10 p.m., $25, 18+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (714) 544-1395; lasantasoc.com.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TOKE OF THE WEEK

» JEFFERSON VANBILLIARD

Tinley Tonics

With its team of highly skilled beverage and cannabis experts, Tinley Beverage Co. (*drinktinley.com*) believes its lineup of tonics may bridge the gap between enjoying a smoke-free cannabis experience at home and not doubling your daily recommended sugar intake. Using only the highest-quality THC distillate from Northern California, its elixirs' euphoric effects can be felt in minutes, by the time you finish one of the deliciously thirst-quenching beverages, you'll be ready for whatever curveball life has planned for you.

Besides being affordable, tasty and easy on the eyes, Tinley's 5-milligram microdose mixers really stand out when paired with your favorite liquor. The agave based sweetness of the Stone Daisy Cannabis-Infused Tonic is predestined for greatness, more so when you add tequila to the mix. Meanwhile, the High Horse elixir has just the right amount of spicy ginger to make even the snootiest of imbibers happier than a pig in slop.

If you find yourself feeling a little less than your best after a full day of work, errands and stress, or if you're guilty of posting memes about how you can't wait for the weekend, let Tinley melt away your cares with its duo of tonics featuring full-flower effects and even-better flavors.

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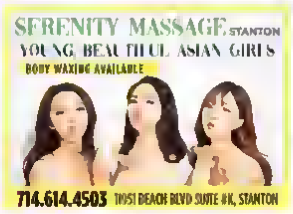

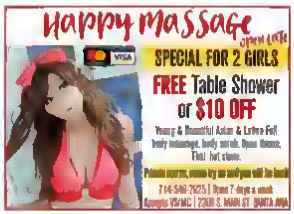

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That Professor

I'm a fortysomething, gay, male professor at a small college. I try hard to not get attracted to students, and I usually succeed. But it's tough to resist temptation when you're surrounded by hot, smart, fun, horny, young guys in a rural area with not many other options. Over the past several years, I've ended up having sex with several students. None of them was a student I was currently teaching or likely to teach, and two had graduated. I'm not actually violating college policy, which only bans faculty from getting involved with students they're currently teaching. On the rare occasions when I've ended up letting my cock do the thinking, I've treated my younger partners with kindness and respect and observed your campsite rule. All of these younger guys solemnly swore to keep our extracurricular activities secret, but still, word might leak out. Most important, I don't want my queer male students—many of whom look to me for mentorship—to think I'm after sex once I'm no longer teaching them, and I don't want my female and straight male students to feel like second-class citizens. On the other hand, I'm a sex-positive person who believes that happy, consensual hanging has its own intrinsic value. I tend to be attracted to younger guys, and I think part of the attraction is that they're less jaded about sex and more excited. Fucking them feels less transactional than the typical hi-bang-jizz-wipe-bye Grindr hookup that seems to be the norm with gay guys in their 30s and older. I'm struggling with how I should feel about these off-campus romps. We're all adults, and we're not breaking any rules. Obviously, the behavior is professionally risky for me, probably foolhardy. But is it immoral? Above all, what should I do when future opportunities present themselves?

Professor Horn-Dog

Yes, these relationships are permissible, in the sense that the school where you teach permits them. They aren't against the rules, those young men were all consenting adults, and you're honoring the campsite rule (leave them in better shape than you found them). But this is an advice column, PHD, and you're not asking me what's permissible, but what's advisable. And what you're doing is crazy inadvisable for all the reasons you cite: the risk of promising and hot gay male students misinterpreting your interest in them as sexual, your straight students feeling as if they may not be getting the full benefit of your attention, and your mediocre and not hot gay male students—sorry, your mediocre and not conventionally attractive gay male students—interpreting their failing grades as sexual rejection.

I, too, am a sex-positive person who believes in happy, consensual banging, and I don't think what you're doing is immoral. But it is incredibly reckless at this particular moment on any American college campus. Power and consent are minefields that students, professors and administrators are tiptoeing through, PHD, but you're humping your way across them. What if your college revises its rules while you're balls deep in a student? What if you have a falling-out with a student you banged and he files a complaint? What if you want to move to a different school that has different rules and your reputation precedes and disqualifies you?

SavageLove

» DAN SAVAGE

Finally, PHD, it's fine to be attracted to younger guys. But if all your experiences with guys in their 30s have been disparaging and transactional, well, it sounds like you were the common denominator in a lot of *meh* sexual encounters. Speaking from experience, I can say that plenty of guys older than 30 are excited about sex and good at it. If every guy older than 30 that you've been with has been underwhelming, well, it's possible they were picking up on your lack of enthusiasm/attraction and reflecting that back at you.

I'm a 33-year-old woman in a nine-year LTR with another woman. Our relationship hasn't been great in the intimacy department for a long time. We've talked it to death, with no real significant change. I started talking to a woman online a few states over who is married and in a similar situation with her husband. Things are great between us, but neither of us envisions a future in which we would leave our partner. My partner is chronically ill, and I support her financially, and my online GF and her husband have young children. I'm wondering if you know anything about sustainability in a relationship with someone online. I'll admit that sometimes it's torture to not be able to be with her in real life. But then there's the question of our significant others. Is it okay to keep this secret if things are good otherwise?

Making It Last Forever

Your significant others aren't questions, MILF, they're people—and you don't intend to leave your person, and your online girlfriend doesn't intend to leave hers. So if you want to spare your chronically ill partner the anxiety of worrying you might leave her for this other person, then you'll keep the online GF a secret. But you need to ask yourself—and your online GF needs to ask herself—if this online relationship/emotional affair is making you a better, more contented and more emotionally available partner to your IRL partner. If it's making you a better partner to the person you're actually/technically/physically with, then great. But if it's a distraction that's causing you to neglect or resent your IRL partner, MILF, then you'll have to end it. If it's harming your IRL relationship and you don't end it, then you're engaging in shitty, dishonest, slo-mo sabotage.

As for the sustainability of online relationships, there are people out there who've maintained online connections—intense friendships, romantic and/or sexual relationships—for as long as people have been able to get online. Sometimes online relationships run their course and come to an end, just like offline relationships and sometimes the online platforms they began on. (There are people out there who are still involved with people they met on Friendster and Myspace.) But offline or on, MILF, there are always challenges and never guarantees.

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